



Sunpapers photo—Hutchins

**MOMENTOES OF A YOUNG ARTIST**—John Chin holds a sculpture fashioned by his brother, Alexander, who was killed in Vietnam. Two of Alexander's paintings hang on the wall behind John. The dead marine's picture is at the left.

# Viet Casualty Thought War Useless

*"I am a soldier and black is my skin. I must kill a man that could be my friend.  
"I am fighting for something that I don't understand. Dear God, why am I in this unknown land?"*

By Louis Granger

Those are some of the last plaintive words and thoughts of Marine Pfc. Alexander S. Chin, killed last week in Vietnam. He was to return to Baltimore March 8 to pick up the threads of his former life as a Baltimore artist and student at Maryland Institute of Art. To his mother, Mrs. Betty Chin, of the 2100 block Koko lane, her son's death was not only tragic but frustrating. Private Chin was sensitive and artistic and should not have

had to be a fighting man, she said. To her and her son the war was "useless. Why do they have to kill our boys?"

**Husband Died**

The more frustrating is the fact that her husband died about five years ago, apparently from injuries he received while in the Army. Yvette Chin, Alexander's sister, said he wrote home about three times a week and in every letter he described the war "as hell."

Private Chin had only one semester before he was to be graduated from the Maryland Institute. "He wanted to teach art in the public schools," she said.

Alexander's poem, "I Am A

Soldier," was sent to his mother February 6. It told of his own frustrations in the war and that his battle was not in Vietnam but at home where other Negroes were fighting for civil rights and equality.

**Rest Of Poem**

The rest of his poem follows:

*This is my battle; that's what they say, and I must keep on killing as I am ordered to do.*

*And maybe one day I'll be killed, too.*

*My battle is at home in my native land. The war that I know and understand is where the black must fight in order to be free. They want their civil rights and equality.*

*This is the kind of war that I*



ALEXANDER S. CHIN

*am prepared to fight; the one that will make me equal to the white.*

*Send me back to the battle at home, because this war here is not my own.*

*It only came about because of some men's greed, but the war at home will make some men free.*

Poetry was a hobby with Private Chin. His main interest was in painting, which ranged from realism to abstract to sur-

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## Flurries May Follow Rain

Rain came to Baltimore this afternoon and was expected to be followed by flurries of snow. No significant accumulation of snow is anticipated.

The Weather Bureau said whatever precipitation this area gets will end tonight as temperatures drop into the 20s and

heavy early snow was followed by mixed snow and rain, officials ordered schools closed for the day.

The snow resulted from a storm moving rapidly northward from South Carolina.

The Baltimore forecast for to-

The snow flurries that were expected to close out the month can do little toward correcting a 2.49-inch deficiency in moisture that has accrued already this year.

Total precipitation this year has been 3.83 inches, but less than a half inch of that was



# th Marine Thought e War Useless

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realism. He also did some sculpturing at the institute.

Eugene Leake, president of Maryland Institute, said "I thought he was the best potential painter we had.

"He was original, poetic and sensitive and a very strong painter."

As a student, Private Chin received B-plus grades in his academic studies. But just before he left, his grades dropped, said Mr. Leake, apparently because he became a civil rights activist "and picketed City Hall and that sort of thing.

## Would Be Back

"When he left us, he said there were other things he had to do, but would be back," Mr. Leake said.

Within his impressionistic painting, the president noted, "there was a real human message . . . there was something he wanted to say."

Private Chin had exhibited paintings at the institute, the Johns Hopkins Hospital and Douglass High School which he attended.

In letters to his brother, Levi, 21, Private Chin said the Allied efforts in Vietnam were useless "because we're not winning," said Levi. "He said there's nothing to fight for."

## "Search And Kill"

Private Chin also wrote following "search and kill" missions in the jungles that the Viet Cong would seem to "pop up out of the ground"—causing "a lot of them (Allied troops) to run scared."

The 23-year-old artist enlisted in the Marine Corps in March, 1966. He had been in Vietnam since February, 1967, assigned to the 3d Marine Division.

His brother said he had been wounded three times before his death February 22 at Quang Tri, approximately 15 miles south of the Demilitarized Zone in South Vietnam.

A 1963 graduate of Douglass High School, Private Chin received a scholarship to the institute in his senior year and while a sophomore at the institute was awarded a Ford Foundation scholarship, plus an institute grant.

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